

Message Text

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16

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INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

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AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USUN NEW YORK 841

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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TAGS: PINT, PINS, SF

SUBJECT: PRESENT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT OFFERS LITTLE

HOPE FOR ADVOCATES OF ACCELERATED CHANGES IN SA DOMESTIC POLICIES

BEGIN SUMMARY: INDICATIONS ARE THAT IN ITS CURRENT
SESSION SOUTH AFRICA'S PARLIAMENT WILL NOT RPT NOT
ENACT LEGISLATION TO AMELIORATE RACE RELATIONS IN
THIS COUNTRY. PRESSURES AT HOME AND ABROAD APPEAR
NOT TO HAVE DRIVEN HOME TO NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT
THE URGENT NEED MANY SOUTH AFRICANS BELIEVE EXISTS
FOR ACCELERATION OF CHANGE. TO CONTRARY, INSTEAD
OF A SESSION MARKED BY VERLIGTHEID (ENLIGHTENMENT),
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IT APPEARS THAT THIS GATHERING OF WHITE PARLIAMENTARIANS

WILL PRODUCE YET ADDITIONAL LEGISLATION DESIGNED TO INCREASE GOVERNMENT CONTROLS OVER LIVES OF SOUTH AFRICANS, WHITES AS WELL AS BLACKS. END SUMMARY.

1. WITH MORE POMP AND FANFARE THAN USUAL IN RECENT YEARS, FIRST SESSION OF NEW PARLIAMENT WAS OPENED BY STATE PRESIDENT FOUCHE AUGUST 2. SOMEWHAT IRONICALLY, FOR FIRST TIME MEN OF COLORED CAPE CORPS TOOK PART IN CEREMONY OUTSIDE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT. IRONY LIES IN FACT THAT LAST WEEK COLORED REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (CRC) PASSED MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT AND ITS INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING CRC ITSELF. SUBSEQUENTLY CRC WAS PROROGUED BY SAG MINISTER OF COLORED RELATIONS, S.W. VAN DER MERWE.

2. FOR PAST MONTH, ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS HAS BEEN DEVOTING CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO REPORTED DISSENSION BETWEEN EXTREME CONSERVATIVES AND RELATIVELY LIBERAL ELEMENTS IN NATIONAL PARTY (NP). ESSENCE OF DISAGREEMENT CENTERS OVER COURSE AND PACE OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT, WITH RIGHT WINGERS, LED BY BROEDERBOND PRESIDENT DR. ANDRIES TREURNICHT, INSISTING THAT RACIAL DISCRIMINATION MUST BE KEPT INTACT. MOST AFRIKAANS NEWS-PAPERS AND A NUMBER OF AFRIKANER SPOKESMEN HAVE OPPOSED THIS VIEW AS NARROW AND SHORT-SIGHTED, AND HAVE STATED THAT SOUTH AFRICAN WHITES MUST BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT CONSEQUENCES OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING SOME MODIFICATIONS OF PRESENT RACIAL POLICIES.

3. DURING NO CONFIDENCE DEBATE WHICH BEGINS AUGUST 5, OPPOSITION UNITED PARTY (UP), DESPITE ITS VULNERABILITY TO COUNTERATTACK BECAUSE OF ITS INTERNAL PROBLEMS, IS LIKELY TO POINT TO SIGNS OF LESS THAN COMPLETE UNITY IN NP. UP AND PROGRESSIVE PARTY HAVE TAILOR-MADE ISSUE IN CHAOTIC CRC SITUATION AND MANIFESTATIONS OF DISAGREEMENT AMONG NP SUPPORTERS OVER HOW SAG SHOULD HANDLE PERPLEXING QUESTION OF COLOREDS' PLACE IN SA SOCIETY. OPPOSITION UNDOUBTEDLY ALSO WILL POINT TO RAPIDLY MOVING DEVELOPMENTS IN ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE AND THE CONSEQUENT EVEN GREATER NEED FOR SA TO SOLVE ITS RACE PROBLEMS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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4. DESPITE PRESSURES FOR ACCELERATION OF CHANGES IN ITS DOMESTIC POLICIES, INDICATIONS ARE THAT NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT WILL NOT RPT NOT INITIATE NEW LEGISLATION OR IMPLEMENT ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WOULD BEGIN TO MEET EXPECTATIONS OF THOSE SOUTH AFRICANS BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE NP WHO FEEL URGENT NEED FOR MORE DRAMATIC AND POSITIVE MOVES IN FIELD OF RACE RELATIONS. IN SHORT, PRESENT

SESSION OF PARLIAMENT DEFINITELY NOT EXPECTED TO BE CHARACTERIZED BY VERLIGTHEID.

5. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD AS MUCH BY VARIETY OF INFORMED SOURCES, INCLUDING A CABINET MINISTER, WHO SAID NO BILLS WILL BE INTRODUCED WHICH WOULD MODIFY SAG'S RACE POLICIES. TO CONTRARY, ASIDE FROM BUDGET BILL AND NUTS-AND-BOLTS LEGISLATION, MAJOR BILLS THAT PARLIAMENT WILL TAKE UP WILL HAVE DEFINITE VERKRAMPTE (REACTIONARY) QUALITY. CONTROVERSIAL BILLS WILL INCLUDE MEASURE TO ESTABLISH PERMANENT PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION ON INTERNAL SECURITY, BILL TO REORGANIZE PUBLICATIONS CONTROL BOARD AND ABOLISH RIGHT TO APPEAL TO COURTS IN CASES INVOLVING GOVERNMENT CENSORSHIP, AND POSSIBLY LEGISLATION AIMED AT IMPOSING CERTAIN CONTROLS ON PRESS. WITH RESPECT TO LATTER, SOURCES WHO HAD TOLD US PREVIOUSLY THAT PRIME MINISTER VORSTER WAS BACKING AWAY FROM HIS THREAT TO ACT AGAINST PRESS NOW SAY THEY HAVE LEARNED THAT LEGISLATION REGARDING PRESS CONTROLS HAS BEEN DRAFTED. HOWEVER, NATIONAL PRESS UNION HAS MADE AN APPROACH TO VORSTER AND, ACCORDING TO NATIONALIST AND NEWSPAPER SOURCES, NO DECISION HAS BEEN MADE BY VORSTER WHETHER OR NOT TO INTRODUCE THE LEGISLATION.

6. PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSION (NOW KNOWN AS LEGRANGE COMMISSION) WHICH HAS BEEN INVESTIGATING LIVERAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR PAST TWO YEARS WILL TABLE ITS FINAL REPORT ON NATIONAL UNION OF SOUTH AFRICAN STUDENTS (NUSAS). FROM THIS, IT IS BELIEVED THAT ACTION TO WEAKEN NUSAS WILL BE TAKEN, POSSIBLY APPLICATION OF AFFECTED ORGANIZATIONS BILL, WHICH WOULD CUT OFF ANY FOREIGN FUNDS RECEIVED BY NUSAS. IN ADDITION, VAN WYK DE VRIES COMMISSION, WHICH FOR SEVERAL YEARS HAS BEEN STUDYING HIGHER EDUCATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN SA, MAY CABLE ITS REPORT. IT IS WIDELY BELIEVED THAT FINDINGS OF THIS COMMISSION COULD LEAD TO DIMINUTION OF AUTONOMY OF SA UNIVERSITIES.

7. COMMENT: IT WOULD HAVE BEEN NAIVE TO EXPECT THAT VORSTER, ARMED WITH HIS LATEST MANDATE FROM SOUTH AFRICAN WHITE VOTERS, WAS POISED TO BEGIN EXCITING, PROGRESSIVE PROGRAM TO INSTITUTE FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES IN SA. SUCH A DRAMATIC TURNABOUT WOULD BE DISTINCTLY AT VARIANCE WITH HIS CAUTIOUS NATURE AND WITH HIS VIEW OF WHAT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE RACES SHOULD BE. MOREOVER, ALTHOUGH HE IS IN STRONGER POSITION IN HIS PARTY THAT EVER BEFORE AND COULD TAKE MORE DECISIVE LEAD IF HE SO WISHED, VORSTER, WE BELIEVE, REMAINS INHIBITED BY RUMBLES OF DISCONTENT FROM THE RIGHT. HE WAS SCARRED BY BREAKAWAY

OF RIGHT-WING NATIONALISTS FROM NP IN 1969 AND
WANTS TO AVOID REPETITION OF SUCH OCCURRENCE.

8. VORSTER AND HIS CABINET, IT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED, ARE
HIGHLY CONSERVATIVE AND IN MANY WAYS PAROCHIAL MEN AND
CANNOT BE EXPECTED SUDDENLY TO BREAK OUT OF THEIR MOLD.
CHANGE IS TAKING PLACE IN SA, BUT ONLY SLOWLY IN RELATION
TO WHAT MANY CONSIDER TO BE THE OBVIOUS NEEDS OF THE
TIMES. NOTWITHSTANDING INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PRESSURES AND THE
ALTERED SITUATION IN PAT'S AND RHODESIA, FOR THE NEAR
FUTURE AT LEAST IT APPEARS UNLIKELY THAT WE SHALL SEE
DRAMATIC FORWARD MOVEMENT TO AMELIORATE
RACE RELATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA.
HURD.

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